DE AUTHENTIA
COMMATIS JOHANNEI

A REFUTATION OF BRUCE METZGER'S ARGUMENTS

Against the Authenticity of I John v. 7

by

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Tres sunt qui testimonium dant in cælo: Pater, Verbum, et Spiritus Sanctus: et hi tres unum sunt.

I Joan. v. 7

PROOEMIUM

The following pages are offered as a refutation, point by point, of the arguments alleged by Bruce Metzger against the authenticity of I John v. 7. Metzger's words are given first, in his own wording, and my answer follows immediately upon each.

Metzger writes: “After μαρτυροῦντες the Textus Receptus adds the following: ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ, ὁ Πατήρ, ὁ Λόγος, καὶ τὸ Ἅγιον Πνεῦμα· καὶ οὗτοι οἱ τρεῖς ἕν εἰσι. 8 καὶ τρεῖς εἰσιν οἱ μαρτυροῦντες ἐν τῇ γῇ. That these words are spurious and have no right to stand in the New Testament is certain in the light of the following considerations.”

I. ON THE GREEK MANUSCRIPTS

> *1. The passage is absent from every known Greek manuscript except eight, and these contain the passage in what appears to be a translation from a late recension of the Latin Vulgate. Four of the eight manuscripts contain the passage as a variant reading written in the margin as a later addition to the manuscript.*

It is true that the verse is found in only 8 manuscripts, but how does that follow to the verse being inauthentic? In 1 John 4:3, the reading λύει τὸν Ἰησοῦν survives in only one Greek Manuscript, that is of the 10th century, and it only survives in the margins, yet this is the reading of St Irænæus (A.H Bk. 3, Ch. 16, §8), among others, St Irænæus was the disciple of St Polycarp, who was the disciple of St John, which makes the reading of 1 John 4:3 in this place either written originally by the Apostle, or to be Apostolic, or at most, very early. Thus a sole late manuscript can preserve an authentic reading. That our earliest Greek manuscript with our verse dates from the 14th century does not entail that the verse is spurious. Our oldest manuscript of the Hymn to Ceres is from the 14th century also, yet nobody doubts that it is as ancient as the time of Pausanias, who quotes it.

Besides, if we go to undisputed Greek citations of the verse, the Greek text of the Fourth Lateran Council cites the verse[1], Joseph Rhakendytos alludes to it, and his allusion matches word for Word with that of the

[1]“Ὅτι τρεῖς εἰσιν οἱ μαρτυροῦντες ἐν οὐρανῷ, ὁ πατήρ, λόγος, καὶ πνεῦμα ἅγιον, καὶ οὗτοι οἱ τρεῖς ἕν ἐσιν.” It of course will be objected that the Greek text of 1 John 5:7 here is back-translated from the Latin (which is an Ad Hoc argument). But in the very same Capitulum of this Council, which cites 1 John 5:7, another clause also, viz. John 10:29, is quoted verbatim. The Latin Text cites it after the Vulgate: Pater, quod dedit mihi, majus est omnibus. On the contrary, the Greek quotes it accurately, according to the Original, Πατηρ, ός δεδωκε μοι, μείζων πάντων εστι.

Codex Britannicus of Erasmus[2] while it is quoted by Emmanuel Calecas, Joseph Bryennius & by Gennadius[3]. We should also not dismiss the testimonial evidence to manuscripts with the verse.

Lorenzo Valla probably found the verse in all 4 of his copies of the New Testament, for in his Collatio Novi Testamenti, he says nothing on verse 7 being missing in his Greek copies. Erasmus's Codex Britannicus, which the critics say is the Codex Montfortianus, but it isn't, for Britannicus reads verses 7-8 according to Erasmus as: Ὅτι τρεῖς εἰσιν οἱ μαρτυροῦντες ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ, πατήρ, λόγος, καὶ πνεῦμα, καὶ οὗτοι οἱ τρεῖς ἕν εἰσιν. Καὶ τρεῖς εἰσιν μαρτυροῦντες ἐν τῇ γῇ, πνεῦμα, ὕδωρ, καὶ αἷμα, καὶ οἱ τρεῖς εἰς τὸ ἕν εἰσιν, while Montfortianus reads: ὅτι τρεῖς εἰσιν οἱ μαρτυροῦντες ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ, πατήρ, λόγος, καὶ πνεῦμα ἅγιον, καὶ οὗτοι οἱ τρεῖς ἕν εἰσι. καὶ τρεῖς εἰσιν οἱ μαρτυροῦντες ἐν τῇ γῇ, πνεῦμα, ὕδωρ, καὶ αἷμα, εἰ τὴνμαρτυρίαν τῶν &c., anybody with their own eyes can see the differences between the two.

Robertus Stephanus either found the verse in all 16 of his codices or in the majority of those 16. For he marks that 7 out of 16 of these manuscripts leave out ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ, which some have mistaken as him saying that 7 leave out the full verse, but his own colleague Beza, who saw these 16 manuscripts himself, says:

> *ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ, Hoc deest in feptem vetuft. cod. fed tamen omnino videtur retinendum, vt tribus in terra teftibus ifta ex aduerfo refpondeant.*

Therefore, 7 of these manuscripts didn't leave out the full verse but only the words ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ, reading verse 7 probably as: ὅτι τρεῖς εἰσιν οἱ μαρτυροῦντες, ὁ Πατὴρ, ὁ Λόγος, καὶ τὸ Ἅγιον Πνεῦμα· καὶ οὗτοι οἱ τρεῖς ἕν εἰσιν. Which basically matches the citation by Calecas. That he found the verse in his codices is also proven by what he says in the Preface to his 1546 edition that he didn't include any reading unless it was found in the majority of his manuscripts[4], well in this same edition he includes the verse.

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[2]Joseph Rhak.: Τριῶν ἀπείρων ἅπλετον συμφυΐαν. Πατήρ, λόγος καὶ πνεῦμα, ταῦτα τὰ τρία, ἐν τρισὶ μία φύσις, ἓν δὲ τὰ τρία. Codex Brit.: (1 John 5:7-8 in Codex Britannicus: "Ὅτι τρεῖς εἰσιν οἱ μαρτυροῦντες ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ, πατήρ, λόγος, καὶ πνεῦμα, καὶ οὗτοι οἱ τρεῖς ἕν εἰσιν." Rhakendytos has: Πατήρ, λόγος καὶ πνεῦμα, Britannicus reads the same: Πατήρ, λόγος καὶ πνεῦμα, Rhakendytos's ταῦτα τὰ τρία matches with Britannicus's οὗτοι οἱ τρεῖς, Rhakendytos's ἓν δὲ τὰ τρία matches with οἱ τρεῖς ἐν εἰσιν of Codex Britannicus. This shows me that Britannicus was never a late copy, but is of the same manuscript tradition as that of the copy which Rhakendytos (1260–1330) used.

[3]Emmanuel Calecas: Ἀλλὰ μὴν τὰ ῥητὰ τῆς Γραφῆς τῷ Πατρὶ καὶ τῷ Υἱῷ τρίτον τῇ τάξει συναριθμοῦσι τὸ Πνεῦμα. Φησὶ γὰρ ὁ Χριστός, "Πορευθέντες εἰς τὸν κόσμον ἅπαντα, μαθητεύσατε πάντα τὰ ἔθνη, Βαπτίζοντες αὐτοὺς εἰς τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ Πατρὸς καὶ Υἱοῦ καὶ τοῦ ἁγίου Πνεύματος" (Matt 28:19). Καὶ ὁ Εὐαγγελιστὴς Ἰωάννης, Τρεῖς εἰσιν οἱ μαρτυροῦντες, ὁ Πατήρ, ὁ Λόγος καὶ τὸ Πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον (1 John 5:7). Καὶ πάλιν, Ἅταν δὲ ἔλθῃ ὁ παράκλητος, ὃν ἐγὼ πέμψω ὑμῖν, τὸ πνεῦμα τῆς ἀληθείας, ὁ παρὰ τοῦ πατρὸς ἐκπορεύεται, ἐκεῖνος μαρτυρήσει περὶ ἐμοῦ (John 15:26). Joseph Bryennius: "Καὶ τὸ πνεῦμά ἐστι τὸ μαρτυροῦν, ὅτι ὁ Χριστός ἐστιν ἡ ἀλήθεια· ὅτι τρεῖς εἰσιν οἱ μαρτυροῦντες ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ, ὁ Πατήρ, ὁ Λόγος, καὶ τὸ Πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον· καὶ οὗτοι οἱ τρεῖς ἕν εἰσι· καὶ τρεῖς εἰσιν οἱ μαρτυροῦντες ἐν τῇ γῇ, τὸ Πνεῦμα, τὸ ὕδωρ, καὶ τὸ αἷμα." Gennadius: Πατρι δε και Υιωι συναριθμούσι και το Πνευμα το άγιον τα της θείας Γραφης ρητά, ως [εν τωι κατά Ματθαίον, "Βαπτίζοντες αυτούς εις το όνομα του Πατρός και του Υιου και του αγίου Πνεύματος"] και εν τηι Ἰωάννου πρώτηι, "Τρεις εισιν οι μαρτυρούντες εν τωι ουρανωι, ο Πατήρ, ο Λόγος και το Πνευμα το άγιον".

Sixtus of Siena found it in Greek manuscripts, for he says that: in nostris Graecis codicbus palam in hunc modum legantur, τρεῖς εἰσιν οἱ μαρτυροῦντες, εν τῷ οὐρανῷ, πατήρ, λόγος, καὶ Πνεῦμα Ἅγιον καὶ οἱ τρεῖς ἕν εἰσιν. Angelo Rocca notes that the verse is found in a very ancient manuscript in Venice.[5] The Complutensian Editors must've found manuscripts with the verse.

And Lastly, Cardinal Wiseman records:

> *I have now to mention the supposed existence of two manuscripts containing the verse, towards which I wish to turn the attention of critics and travellers. I had frequently heard from a gentleman well known in the literary world as a Greek and oriental scholar, that he had seen manuscripts in the East which contained the verse. He had in fact, travelled over great part of Greece expressly with the view of collating manuscripts of the New Testament, for a latin version of it, which he afterwards published. Anxious to collect with greater accuracy the information he had to give upon the subject, I asked him more particularly to state to me what he had seen in reference to it. I took a note of his observations within a few minutes of our conversation; and as more than a year has since elapsed, I will content myself with transcribing it here.*
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> *"His statement is that he has seen several manuscripts with the verse erased, and two in which it is written, prima manu, in the margin. One was at Nicosia in Cyprus, in possession of a Greek of abilities, a merchant as I understood him. It was in UNCIAL LETTERS, large; on the margin by the same hand, although in smaller characters, was the verse, with an annotation that it belonged to the text. From his manner and character, I could have no reason whatever to doubt that he was perfectly sincere in his statements."*

There is, therefore, a bunch of manuscript evidence for the verse. Metzger says the manuscripts are from the Latin, but upon what basis? This is begging the question.

II. ON THE GREEK FATHERS

> *The passage is quoted by none of the Greek Fathers, who, had they known it, would most certainly have employed it in the Trinitarian controversies (Sabellian and Arian).*

This is just false, I can give at least 5 Greek Fathers & Theologians who cite the verse.

1. Origen, Selecta in Psalmos, on Psalm 122:2: Πατρὸς καὶ Υἱοῦ πνεῦμα καὶ σῶμα· παιδίσκη δὲ κυρίας τοῦ ἁγίου Πνεύματος ἡ ψυχή. Τὰ δὲ τρία Κύριος ὁ Θεὸς ἡμῶν ἐστίν· οἱ γὰρ τρεῖς ἕν εἰσιν.

[4]"...ex iis ita hunc nostrum recensuimus, ut nullam omnino literam secus esse pateremur, quam plures, iique meliores libri, tanquam testes, comprobarent."

[5]Haec verba sunt certissime de textu et allegantur contra haereticos ab Athanasio, Gregorio Nazianzeno, Cyrillo et Cypriano, et Hieronymus in prologo dicit ab infidelibus scriptoribus fuisse praetermissa. In graeco etiam quodam antiquissimo exemplari quod habetur Venetiis leguntur; unde colligitur graeca, quae passim feruntur, in hac parte esse mendosa, et omnia latina manuscripta in quibus non habentur illa verba signata.

2. Symbolum Antiochenum: δηλονότι πατρός, ἀληθῶς πατρὸς ὄντος, υἱοῦ δὲ ἀληθῶς υἱοῦ ὄντος, τοῦ δὲ ἁγίου πνεύματος ἀληθῶς ἁγίου πνεύματος ὄντος, τῶν ὀνομάτων οὐχ ἁπλῶς οὐδὲ ἀργῶς κειμένων, ἀλλὰ σημαινόντων ἀκριβῶς τὴν οἰκείαν ἑκάστου τῶν ὀνομαζομένων ὑπόστασίν τε καὶ τάξιν καὶ δόξαν, ὡς εἶναι τῇ μὲν ὑποστάσει τρία, τῇ δὲ συμφωνίᾳ ἕν. (...) ἡμεῖς γὰρ πᾶσι τοῖς ἐκ τῶν θείων γραφῶν παραδεδομένοις ὑπό τε προφητῶν καὶ ἀποστόλων ἀληθινῶς τε καὶ ἐμφόβως καὶ πιστεύομεν καὶ ἀκολουθοῦμεν. (The only verse which supports the persons of the trinity being one in consent is 1 John 5:7)

3. St. (or ps-) Athanasius, Disputatio Contra Arium: “Τί δὲ καὶ τὸ τῆς ἀφέσεως τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν παρεκτικὸν, καὶ ζωοποιόν, καὶ ἁγιαστικὸν λουτρόν, οὗ χωρὶς οὐδεὶς ὄψεται τὴν βασιλείαν τῶν οὐρανῶν, οὐκ ἐν τῇ τρισμακαρίᾳ ὀνομασίᾳ δίδοται τοῖς πιστοῖς; Πρὸς δὲ τούτοις πᾶσιν Ἰωάννης φάσκει· «Καὶ οἱ τρεῖς ἕν εἰσιν.»”

4. Ibid, Synopsis on Holy Scripture: “Τετάρτη, Ἰωάννου. Οὕτως καὶ αὕτη καλεῖται, ἐπειδὴ καὶ αὐτὸς Ἰωάννης ὁ εὐαγγελιστὴς καὶ ταύτην ἐπιστέλλει, ὑπομιμνήσκων τοὺς ἤδη πιστεύσαντας εἰς τὸν Κύριον. (...) Καὶ τὴν ἑνότητα δὲ τοῦ Υἱοῦ πρὸς τὸν Πατέρα δείκνυσι· καὶ ὅτι ὁ ἀρνούμενος τὸν Υἱὸν οὐδὲ τὸν Πατέρα ἔχει.”

5. A Greek homily dated to 381 AD: “β. Τοιγαροῦν μὴ μέριζε τὴν ἀμέριστον φύσιν, μὴ τέμνε τὴν ἀδιαίρετον οὐσίαν· γνώριζε δὲ μᾶλλον τὴν δύναμιν ἀκριβῶς. Εἷς κέκληται ὁ Πατήρ καὶ ὁ Υἱὸς καὶ τὸ Πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον. Περὶ μὲν γὰρ τοῦ Πατρὸς λέγει ὁ Υἱὸς, Ὅταν ἴδητε τὸν Υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου καθήμενον ἐκ δεξιῶν τῆς δυνάμεως· καὶ δύναμιν εἰρηκὼς, ἔστησε τὴν δόξαν, ἵνα θαυμάσῃς τὴν ἔννοιαν.”

That it wasn't quoted by them in Arian & Sabellian controversies doesn't prove anything, Firstly, If the Fathers could refute the Sabellians on John 10:30, there'd be no reason for them to refute them on 1 John 5:7, since they both cross reference. Secondly, Arianism was mainly on the Consubstantiality of the Son with the Father, and there's already a verse which supports that — John 10:30, there'd be no reason for them to cite 1 John 5:7.

III. ON THE ANCIENT VERSIONS

> *The passage is absent from the manuscripts of all ancient versions (Syriac, Coptic, Armenian, Ethiopic, Arabic, Slavonic), except the Latin...*

Metzger gives these versions as if they all have their manuscripts without 1 John 5:7 early, which simply isn't true. The Syriac, rather than being against our verse, is favourable to it. In many manuscripts, verse 8 starts with “AND there are three that bear witness...” instead of “FOR there are three that bear witness...”. As Burgess argues: “The conjunctive particle, which, in the Syriac version, introduces the testimony of the spirit, the water, and the blood, betrays the loss of the preceding clause.”

Our earliest Ethiopic manuscript with even 1 John in it is from the 13th century! And this is what the critics will use to prove our verse is spurious? The Arabic has the same problem with our earliest being from the 9th century, same with the Armenian and with the Coptic, we only have 1 that can be used in any way against our verse and since they're from the same region as the 3 Greek MSS. that omit it (Sinaiticus, Vaticanus, Alexandrinus), I treat it in the exact same way as those 3. Our Earliest Slavonic manuscript with 1 John 5 is from the 13th century also, and this is his evidence?

IV. ON THE OLD LATIN FATHERS: TERTULLIAN, CYPRIAN, & AUGUSTINE

> *...and it is not found (a) in the Old Latin in its early form (Tertullian Cyprian Augustine)*

What does Metzger mean by “its early form”? Metzger acts as if they cite 1 John 5:6-8 differently than how it's found in the Textus Receptus/Clementine Vulgate, BUT NONE OF THEM DO!

Tertullian never cites 1 John 5:8, but in Against Praxeas, Chapter 25, he cites the final clause:

> *The connection of the Father in the Son, and of the Son in the Paraclete, makes three coherent persons, one proceeding from another, which three are one [tres unum sunt), not one [person]. In the way it is said (John 10:30): I and the Father are one; referring to the unity of substance, not to the singularity of number.*

It is argued by Critics that tres unum sunt is only a theological statement, but Fr. Lamy has refuted this:

> *It has been said that Tertullian makes no allusion to any particular text, and that he simply expressed the Catholic doctrine. If so, why did he not say: Et tres una sunt substantia? Why did he make use of an expression so peculiar that he felt called upon immediately to explain it by saying that “tres unum sunt” refers “ad substantiae unitatem, non ad numeri singularitatem?” We have, therefore, in these words of Tertullian, not a citation, but a reference to the verse of the three witnesses, which proves that Tertullian knew the text and that it was known to those in Africa whom he addressed.*

Some critics argue that Tertullian is allegorizing verse 8, since it also in the Latin versions has tres unum sunt, but Tertullian & Praxeas, who abused tres unum sunt, didn't use the Latin, but the GREEK, and the Greek of the verse doesn't say: the three are one, but rather: the three are IN one. Since Tertullian had the verse in his copies and did not allegorize verse 8, I will not bother to refute the desperate argument that St Cyprian, his own student, in De Unitate Ecclesiae, Chapter 6, allegorized 1 John 5:8 when he says: of the Father, and the Son, & the Holy Ghost, it is written: & these three are one.

Some Critics argue that St. Cyprian says “Son”, not “Word”, but Firstly, St. Cyprian could've read: Pater, FILIUS, et Spiritus Sanctus in 1 John 5:7, and Secondly, St. Cyprian isn't quoting scripture when he says “of

the Father, and the Son, & the Holy Ghost, it is written", he's telling us who the subjects are of the words "& these three are one", which in 1 John 5:7 are indeed the Father, Son (Since the Son is the Word) & Holy Ghost. It's also argued that St. Cyprian would've cited the full verse & not just the final clause, but this is false, St. Cyp.'s intention was to prove the unity of the Church from the Unity of the Godhead, and to this, only the words "& hi tres unum sunt" sufficed.

St. Augustine, in De Trinitate 4.29, 4.31, De Civitate Dei 5.11, De Anima et Eius Origine 2.4, Tractatus in Epistolam Ioannis 10.3 has the verse in mind:

> *But just as He who begot and He who is begotten are one, so also He who sent and He who is sent are one; because the Father and the Son are one (John 10:30). So also the Holy Ghost is one with them; because these three are one.*
>
> *For in Their own substance, whereby They are, the three are one — the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost — without any temporal motion, above every creature, the selfsame thing, without any intervals of times or places, and together one and the same from eternity unto eternity, as being that very eternity itself, which is not without truth and charity.*
>
> *Therefore the most high and true God, together with His Word and the Holy Ghost which three are one is one omnipotent God.*
>
> *Further, that which is not made, and yet is from Him, either is begotten by Him or proceeds from Him: that which is begotten is the only-begotten Son; that which proceeds is the Holy Ghost. And this Trinity is of one and the same nature. For these three are one, and each individually is God, and all together are one God, immutable, eternal, without any beginning or end of time.*
>
> *In the Father is unity, in the Son equality, in the Holy Ghost the harmony of unity and equality. And these three are all one because of the Father, all equal because of the Son, and all connected because of the Holy Ghost.*
>
> *And what is the end? Christ. Because Christ is God, and the end of the commandment is charity, and God is charity: because the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost are one.*

In Contra Maximinum, he also clearly has the verse in mind:

> *...to receive. [...] Thus, if three things, by which they are signified, came forth from the body of the Lord: just as it resounded from the body of the Lord, that the nations should be baptized in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. In the name; not: In the names; for these three are one, and these three are one God.*
>
> *But we also say this, which you do not say, on account of one and the same nature and substance: These three are one. (2.20.1)*

> *For there are three Persons: the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost; and these three (because they are of one substance) are one, and are most supremely one, where there is no diversity of natures, no diversity of wills. (2.10.2)*
>
> *Moreover, the signs by which they were signified, which came forth from the body of the Lord, prefigured the Church proclaiming the one and the same nature of the Trinity: since these three, WHO WERE SIGNIFIED IN A THREEFOLD MANNER, are one... (2.22.3)*

The fact that Saint Augustine, when quoting 1 John 5:8, simply quotes it as “et tres unum sunt” without hi, while in these quotes saying “HI tres unum sunt” clearly tells us he had two different verses in 1 John 5:7-8. The last quote in particular clearly shows us that he's saying that “these three are one, who were signified in a threefold manner” that is, verse 7 says they are one, and in verse 8 they are signified.

The other quotes I gave by him are of the exact same weight. Tres unum sunt/Tria unum sunt can't be mere theological statements since St. Augustine knew well from Saint Cyprian that these words are from scripture when said of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Neither can they be an allegory of 1 John 5:8, even though St. Augustine allegorized 1 John 5:8 in Contra Maximinum 2.22.3, he did it to defend his thesis that unum sunt is always said of things that are of the same substance, but since the spirit, water and blood are of different substances, he allegorized verse 8 to the Trinity, and clearly says that any other interpretation is allowed, and that the words of verse 8 COULD be said of the Trinity, not that they are said, which would make no sense at all if he allegorized the verse 8 other times in his writings.

But to demolish any type of evasion that St. Augustine allegorized verse 8 in these statements of his, in De Trinitate 6.3, he argues for the exact same thesis as in his later Contra Maximinum that unum sunt is always said of stuff that are of the same substance, yet doesn't adduce 1 John 5:8 once even though it would trouble his thesis, this is a very weird thing for him to do if just an entire book before that he allegorized verse 8 to the Trinity, the only answer is that he knew of verse 7.

V. ON ST. JEROME'S VULGATE

> *or in the Vulgate (b) as issued by Jerome (codex Fuldensis [copied a.d. 541-46] and codex Amiatinus [copied before a.d. 716]) or (c) as revised by Alcuin (first hand of codex Vallicellianus [ninth century])*

It is false to say that St. Jerome did not originally include it in his Vulgate. There is one proof, older than any manuscript, which may prove that he did. Facundus cites verse 8 according to the Vulgate: tres sunt qui testimonium DANT IN TERRA... et HI tres unum sunt. His inclusion of In Terra clearly shows he had a preceding In Caelo, and since his citation matches word for word with our Vulgate, this is a proof, older than any other manuscript, that verse 7 was included in manuscripts of the Vulgate.

Fuldensis, though it does not have the verse in the main text, nonetheless contains the prologue of St. Jerome. Codex Amiatinus & Alcuin (who we don't know if he included 1 John 5:7) are too late for any decision.

VI. ON THE INTERNAL PROBABILITIES — TRANSCRIPTIONAL

> *As regards transcriptional probability, if the passage were original, no good reason can be found to account for its omission, either accidentally or intentionally, by copyists of hundreds of Greek manuscripts, and by translators of ancient versions.*

The Ancient version nonsense has already been answered. The omission in the Greek mss. is through parablepsis: the words τρεῖς εἰσιν οἱ μαρτυροῦντες is indeed repeated in both verses and a scribe could easily have slipped his eye and omitted verse 7. If one objects that the words “on earth” would've remained if the Parablepsis happened, I would respond that initially yes, then a later scribe would realize that there is nothing put in contrast to “on earth”, so he'd remove those words. Arians and other heretics, seizing upon this variant, then omitted verse 7, causing it to be lost from the Greek codices, the Apostle, or to be Apostolic.

Homoioteleuton can cause widespread omission in manuscripts: in 1 John 2:23, over 80% (i.e. over 400) of manuscripts omit the second clause, that he who acknowledges Jesus acknowledges the Father, yet this is the reading of our earliest manuscripts, of St Cyprian, St Athanasius, St Cyril, & of the Vulgate among others. This omission is easily explainable by Homoioteleuton due to the scribe's eye confusing τὸν πατέρα ἔχει.

Also, some of the manuscripts that omit the verse betray the loss of verse 7 via Homoioteleuton. Codex Sinaiticus & another one mentioned by Knittel, read verse 8 as ὅτι οἱ τρεῖς εἶσιν οἱ μαρτυροῦντες, τὸ πνεῦμα καὶ τὸ ὕδωρ καὶ τὸ αἷμα... The inclusion of οἱ before τρεῖς in the starting clause of verse 8 is absent in the majority of mss. And its inclusion can be explained by verse 7 having been accidentally omitted by the scribe of Sinaiticus or by the previous scribe of the copy which the scribe of Sinaiticus was copying from. The scribe of the previous copy, when copying verse 7, would mistake ὅτι for the οὗτοι in the final clause of verse 7 and skip his eye there and then write οἱ τρεῖς, accidentally skipping ἕν and then skipping εἶσι to εἶσιν and then writing the remaining οἱ μαρτυροῦντες....

One GREEK Manuscript from the 11th century — GA 465, also betrays the loss of verse 7 in the margins, where in 1 John 5:7-8, it reads first: ΤΡΕΙΣ, τουτέστι, το Πνευμα ἅγιον καὶ ὁ Πατηρ καὶ αυτος ἑαυτοῦ. (“Three, that is, the Holy Spirit and the Father and He Himself.”) And for the final clause of verse 8: μια θεοτης, εἰς Θεος, This is hard to derive from the final clause of verse 8, for how can one conclude from the words “εἰς τὸ ἕν εἰσιν” – “One Godhead, One Divinity” – when εἰς τὸ ἕν εἰσιν means “in one are” or “in one

they agree”. Even though the manuscript doesn't have the verse, the copy that it was being copied from, or the copy that copy was being copied from, etc, had the verse, and the scribe only copied the margins believing by mistake that they were in reference to verse 8, while in reality being a commentary on verse 7.

In 8 Manuscripts (that being GA 254 (14th/11th cent.), GA 436 (11th/12th cent.), GA 444 (15th/14th cent.), GA 1067 (11th cent.), GA 1352 (13th cent.), GA 1409 (11th cent.), GA 2475 (11th cent.), and GA 2541 (12th cent.) verse 8's final clause is not read as: καὶ οἱ τρεῖς εἰς τὸ ἕν εἰσιν, but as: καὶ οἱ τρεῖς ἕν εἰσιν, only under the influence of verse 7, could the scribe of the copies these scribes were copying from, write οἱ τρεῖς ἕν εἰσιν, instead of οἱ τρεῖς εἰς τὸ ἕν εἰσιν, mistakingly thinking that the Earthly witnesses would have the same concluding statement as the heavenly witnesses do.

VII. ON THE INTERNAL PROBABILITIES — INTRINSIC

As regards intrinsic probability, the passage makes an awkward break in the sense.

How does it do so? I'm Interested, because it actually doesn't break any sense. Without the seventh verse the agreement the Gospel of St. John has with his epistle is destroyed. The testimony of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost to the divinity our Lord Jesus mentioned in John 8:17-18 & in John 15:26 does not have its referent in 1 John 5:7 if it is omitted, while the evidence for the humanity of our Lord Jesus, mentioned in John 19:30, 34 has its referent in 1 John 5:8.

The final clause of verse 6 has no answer if verse 7 is left out. The final clause of v.6 reads: It is the Spirit which testifieth, that Christ is the truth. Why? Verse 7 answers: For there are three who give testimony in heaven, &c. Verse 7 lists the Holy Ghost as a witness with the Father & the Word, answering the final clause of the seventh verse, while the eighth verse doesn't answer it since it doesn't mention the Holy Ghost at all (And no, the spirit in verse 8 isn't the Holy Ghost, but that which Christ gave up on the cross John 19:30).

The testimony of God in the ninth verse has no referent unless verse 7 is retained. If one shall object that the Testimony of God is that of the spirit, water & blood, I answer that the testimony of the Father, the Son & the Holy Ghost is clearly separate than to that of the spirit, water & blood (as shown in the verses) therefore the argument fails.

If the seventh verse had not preceded, it is probable that the water and the blood would not have been mentioned as witnesses: Πνέυμα, ὕδωρ, and αἱμα are evidences of Christ's human nature in the incidents of His death on the cross, but they are not recorded as witnesses in the Gospel, nor styled as such in verse 6. The Heavenly Witnesses are required also for St. John's argument. Ebion and Cerinthus were wresting the divine nature from the Lord Christ, leaving Him with only humanity, albeit greatly glorified; conversely, Basilides and his disciples asserted that in the Lord Christ there was no true body or humanity, but only an imaginary

one. Against these, and to refute them, a more certain testimony needed to be presented. To meet this need, St. John wrote this epistle, in which he desired to prove by witnesses that Jesus is the Son of God (1 John 5:13).

It is to refute the Ebionites and Basilidians that he sets forth three witnesses in heaven and three on earth, of equal authority and truth: in heaven, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; on earth, the spirit, the water, and the blood.

— FINIS —